

# MERCATOR:

O R,

## Commerce Retrieved,

B E I N G

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Thursday, June 17. to Saturday, June 19. 1714.

*The Opposers full of Cavil and teizing Impertinence.*

*Many Words do not fill a Bushell.*

*When the Mercator complains the French get English Wooll.*

*These Men tell us they have Spanish Wooll enough.*

*What signifies Spanish Wooll to the greatest part of our Manufacturers?*

*Many Manufacturing Countries in England know nothing of the Spanish Wooll.*

*An Account of what Goods use Spanish Wooll, and what do not.*

*The Opposers talk meerly for Parties and private Interest.*

*Some of their Absurdies enumerated.*

*An Exhortation against Owling.*

**I**T is very probable, that from the teizing Importunities and eternal Cavils of such People as the *Mercator* has to do with, that Proverbial Saying was first introduced into the World; That many Words do not fill a Bushell.

The *Mercator* has frequently affirm'd, that our Manufactures cannot be taken from us, neither by the French or Dutch, or any Nation else in the World, because they have not the English Wooll. Our Wise Opposers spend their time to answer this, by telling us, that they have Wooll from Spain.

This is such a Froth, such a trifling and jesting with the World, that it is really intolerable; Who ever said the French had any want of Spanish Wooll? Is this any thing to the present Question? Had they not always Spanish Wooll as much as they pleased, as much as they knew what to do with, and as Cheap, and with the same Conveniences as they have now? And had not we also the same?

Nay, farther than all this, they have a great deal of Spanish Wooll from us; by the last Account of Export from hence in the *Mercator* was 71 Bags of Spanish Wooll, so that by the way, they give as good a Price for it as we do, otherwise they could not afford to buy it of us.

But what is all this to the Treaty of Commerce? Would these Men have made such a Peace or such a Treaty if it had been in their Power as to have prohibited the Spaniards letting the French buy their Wooll? How could they pretend to that? And why in all times

of former Trade did we furnish the French with Spanish Wooll from England, as may appear by the Custom-house Accounts and their own Schemes?

The Matter of Fact is this, that England matters not what any Nation can do in Woollen-Manufacture by the Spanish Wooll, if they have not English Wooll to mix with it. It is true, they may make some Clothes and some fine Druggets all of Spanish Wooll, and this is no Novelty at all, they might always have done this as well as now; but what's this to the Grofs of our Woollen-Manufacture, our middling Clothes double and single Dozens, or Yorkshire-Cloths, our Western Whites, our Kersies, Bayes, Norwich Stuffs, Exeter Serges, Sayes, Perpetuanas, Shaloons, Sagathies, and common Druggets; our Flannels, Cottons, Frizes, Stockings, and many other sorts of Woollen Goods made here, have not a Hair of Spanish Wooll in them, nor cannot be made of it? And those Clothes and Druggets which have some Spanish Wooll among them have a great Mixture of English Wooll in them: Those Goods that are made wholly of Spanish Wooll, being but very few compared to the rest.

So that this is all but an empty impertinent Cavil, and nothing at all to the Purpose; for keep out our Wooll from the French, and we value not all they can do in the Manufacture with all the Spanish Wooll they have or can get.

We have Spanish Wooll as well as the French, and can have as much as we please, but take away our own Wooll from the Work; and let any Manufacturer be asked, what would



become of our Trade? We have many large Provinces or Counties in England, where the Woollen Manufactures are their whole Business, and who yet know not what this using of Spanish Wooll means; nay, where perhaps the Manufacturers never saw an Ounce of Spanish Wooll in their Lives; what would our Colchester Bay-makers, or Welch Flannel-makers, or Sudbury Say-makers do with Spanish Wooll? What would they make of it at Leeds, Hallifax, Wakefield, Rochdale, Bradford, &c. in the North of England?

And what can the French do with all the Spanish Wooll they can get? Nay, tho' they had it all to themselves, what can they do with it towards making those Manufactures we speak of, such as Bayes, Sayes, Long-Elles, Dozens, Kerfies, &c? Or what would they do without a Mixture of English Wooll to make all the Long-Cloths and Whites, which now they buy of us?

So that all Cavil amounts to no more than an Amusement, and has no more in it than a meer Tale of *Robinhood*: Had these Men spoken to the purpose, they would have complained of the French, how that by the help of English Wooll to mix with the Spanish Wooll, they were enabled to make our Medley-Cloths, and that thereby, *for it can be no other way*, the Spanish Wooll is made more serviceable to them; this the *Mercator* would have acknowledged to them, and have own'd it to be just; but the *Mercator* has this especially to say in these People's praise, that there never has been seen in all their Writings any one Proposal meerly disinterested from Parties, and Calculated for the abstracted good of their Country. But a Man may see in all they have done or said, the evident Partiality of Scribblers, hired and employed in the Interest of the Dutch Traders on one side, or the Portuguese Traders on the other; and this is the true Reason why the true Interest of Trade has not been the Case in all they have been Writing, any farther than as it concerts with those People.

The *Mercator* talks of things useful and advantageous for general Commerce, they still reply with something about the Dutch or the Portugal Trade; as if all the Trade of Britain was of no Consequence, compared to those two Branches, and that all the Commerce of the World was trifling to us, except that to Holland and Portugal; in the behalf of these things, they have printed such gross Absurdities, such Falsties and Nonsense, as none but Men listed in the pay of Parties could ever submit to.

This has made them tell us, that we lose by the Spanish Trade, that the French rival us in the Spanish Trade, but do not in the Portuguese; that we do not receive our Bullion from Spain in return of our Goods, but buy it for the Profit of the Exchange, and Trade in it as a Merchandize; that the French have Wooll of their own sufficient to carry on their Manufactures; that their Wines will in time of Peace be 25 l. per Ton, and their Brandy also; whereas both are to be bought under

20 l. at this time, and yet this is esteemed a Year of Scarcity.

Nothing but the Circumstance of a partial Sett of Writers, set on Work to carry on private Interests both of State and of Trade, could be guilty of putting such things as these upon the World.

But such we must submit to; and this is it that tires the *Mercator* and others, even in reading what they say, which indeed is no otherwise worth while than to abhor and detest the Partiality of the Men.

We have another Notion which they have spread abroad among our Country Manufacturers, in order, as the rest of their Writings have been also, to keep the poor Countrymen mutinous and uneasy; this is, That the French will engross all the Spanish Wooll, and we shall get none of it for our use.

Had the Interest of France been so great in Spain as these Men have taken upon them to tell us it is, this might have been, but then these things also must have happened, (*viz.*) 1. That the Spaniards would have found it their Interest to have discouraged their Trade to England, which, by their own Maxims, *viz.* That we lose by the Spanish Trade cannot be supposed. 2. That the French are able to make use of or Manufacture and Work up all the Growth of Wooll which Spain produces, which is as true, as that the City of Paris is able to drink up all the Water of the River *Sein*, which runs thro' it.

The Spanish Wooll we see remains free; the Peace has been two Years made, the Trade above two Years open, we have not yet seen any Obstruction to the Wooll Trade, we buy what we want, nay, and more than we can dispose of, for we send it abroad again, and we buy it as Cheap as the French, for we sell it again to the French, as is Noted before; we have no Engrossing the Wooll by the French, or raising the Price by the Spaniards, we pay no more than other Nations, we have Neighbours fare and Neighbours share in it; in short, not the least Shadow of all the suggested Engrossment appears; the Consequence whereof is, that those who suggested these things are a pack of People who have been in a Conspiracy with the Party to raise Discontents, and engage the People in Mutinies and Tumultuous Complaints against the Government.

The Application of all these Things returns, just as it did before, to an Exhortation to the English Nation, as they tender the Safety and Prosperity of their Countries Commerce, which is indeed the Prosperity of their Country it self, that they would, as one Man, agree for no Gain or private Advantage, either connive at or be concern'd in the sending our Wooll abroad, but shun it upon all Occasions, detect it, and preserve the same Aversions to it, and to those concern'd in it, as they would to Highway Robbers and House-breakers, for without Controversie, there are no greater Thieves in the Nation, to the Nation, than those who Export our Wooll, as in its Place may be shewn.

